

IN THE CLAIMS:

The following claim listing replaces all previous claim listings.

1 Claim 1. (currently amended) A method of operating a
2 mobile agent that travels through a network of a number of
3 computers, wherein the mobile agent is executed in a sequence
4 of stages and wherein each stage comprises a set of places,
5 the method comprising the following steps:
6 executing the mobile agent in at least one of the set of
7 places of a respective one of the stages,
8 evaluating in which place of the respective stage the
9 mobile agent has been executed successfully,
10 agreeing on a primary place among the set of places,
11 aborting and/or undoing any operation in connection with
12 the mobile agent in any other place of the respective stage,
13 moving a modified mobile agent resulting from the
14 successful execution to the next stage to at least two
15 forwarding places, and
16 wherein agreeing on a primary place among the set of
17 places includes generating a decision in each stage, the
18 decision ~~including~~ based on the primary place that corresponds
19 to the place in which the mobile agent has executed
20 successfully, the set of places of the next stage to which the
21 modified mobile agent is moved, and the resulting modified
22 mobile agent.

1 Claim 2. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein the
2 steps are repeated for any one of the sequence of stages.

1 Claim 3. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein the
2 mobile agent is executed sequentially in the set of places of

3 the respective stage, and wherein the mobile agent is not
4 executed anymore in subsequent places after successful
5 execution in one of the set of places and agreement on this
6 successful execution.

1 Claim 4. (cancelled)

1 Claim 5. (previously presented) The method of claim 1
2 wherein at least one of the primary place and/or the set of
3 places of the next stage and/or the resulting modified mobile
4 agent is confirmed to at least all other places of the
5 respective stage except the primary place.

1 Claim 6. (previously presented) The method of claim 1
2 wherein at least one of the primary place and/or the set of
3 places of the next stage and/or the resulting modified mobile
4 agent is moved to all places of the next stage.

1 Claim 7. (original) The method of claim 6 wherein the
2 move is performed as a reliable forward function.

1 Claim 8. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein the
2 steps are managed by a fault-tolerance enabler (FTE) which is
3 independent of the mobile agent.

1 Claim 9. (original) The method of claim 8 wherein the FTE
2 travels with the mobile agent to the set of places of the
3 respective stage.

1 Claim 10. (currently amended) A computer program product
2 embodied in computer memory comprising program code ~~means for~~
3 ~~use~~ for operating a mobile agent that travels through a
4 network of a number of computers, wherein the mobile agent is
5 executed in a sequence of stages and wherein each stage
6 comprises a set of places, the computer program product

7 comprising instructions for:

8 executing the mobile agent in at least one of the set of
9 places of a respective one of the stages,

10 evaluating in which place of the respective stage the
11 mobile agent has been executed successfully,

12 agreeing on a primary place among the set of places,

13 aborting and/or undoing any operation in connection with
14 the mobile agent in any other place of the respective stage,

15 moving a modified mobile agent resulting from the
16 successful execution to the next stage to at least two
17 forwarding places, and

18 generating a decision in each stage, the decision
19 ~~including~~ based on the primary place that corresponds to the
20 place in which the mobile agent has executed successfully, the
21 set of places of the next stage to which the modified mobile
22 agent is moved, and the resulting modified mobile agent.

1 Claim 11. (currently amended) Computer program product
2 according to claim 10, wherein the program code ~~means~~ is
3 stored on a computer-readable medium.

1 Claim 12. (cancelled)

1 Claim 13. (previously presented) The method of claim 1,
2 wherein the mobile agent is a computer program that acts
3 autonomously on behalf of an agent owner or user and that
4 travels through a network of a number of computers.

1 Claim 14. (previously presented) The computer program
2 product of claim 10, wherein the mobile agent is a computer
3 program that acts autonomously on behalf of an agent owner or
4 user and that travels through a network of a number of
5 computers.

1 Claim 15. (cancelled)

1 Claim 16. (previously presented) The method of claim 1,
2 wherein non-primary places are configured to verify the
3 modified mobile agent has successfully arrived at the set of
4 places of the next stage to which the modified mobile agent is
5 moved.

1 Claim 17. (previously presented) The computer program
2 product of claim 10, wherein non-primary places are configured
3 to verify the modified mobile agent has successfully arrived
4 at the set of places of the next stage to which the modified
5 mobile agent is moved.

1 Claim 18. (cancelled)